

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7338

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 0735

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:

SUBJECT: REACTION OF PRESIDENT PEREZ TO AMCHAM VISIT TO WASHINGTON

1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CALLED UPON ME THIS AFTERNOON TO REPORT THEIR ONE-HOUR CONVERSATION SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, WITH PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ ON THEIR RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON. THEY FOUND THE PRESIDENT RELAXED, FRIENDLY AND EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THEIR INITIATIVE. HE LAID STRESS ON THE FACT THAT HE KNEW THAT THE U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAD GONE TO WASHINGTON OF ITS OWN ACCORD AND NOT FROM ANY NUDGING FROM THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT. PRESIDENT ALSO REFERRED WITH SATISFACTION TO A TELEPHONE REPORT HE HAD RECEIVED EARLIER FROM PEREZ GUERRERO ON THE EXCELLENT RECEPTION HE HAD BEEN GIVEN IN THE DEPARTMENT AND BY SECRETARY KISSINGER. ON THE WHOLE, AMCHAM REPRESENTATIVES FELT THAT THEIR EFFORT HAD BEEN NOT ONLY CONSTRUCTIVE IN WASHINGTON BUT A MATTER OF DEEP APPRECIATION ON THE PART OF THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT HERE.

2. AMCHAM REPS CONCURRED IN MY FEELING (CARACAS 734) THAT VENEZUELAN LEADERS ARE OVERLY ANXIOUS IN THEIR HOPE TO SEE A MODIFICATION OF OUR TRADE ACT FAVORABLE TO VENEZUELA, WHICH WOULD THEN FACILITATE VENEZUELA'S GRACEFUL REENTRY TO THE BUENOS AIRES CONFERENCE. THEY LIKewise AGREED WITH WHAT I HAD TOLD SCHACHT THIS MORNING, THAT IF OUR CONGRESS SHOULD GET THE IMPRESSION VENEZUELA WAS THREATENING ITS ABSTENTION FROM BA AS A REPRISAL FOR A LACK OF ACTION IN MODIFYING OUR TRADE ACT, SUCH AN ATTITUDE

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WOULD HAVE PRECISELY THE OPPOSITE EFFECT FROM THAT HOPE FOR BY

VENEZUELA.
MCCLINTOCK

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